

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-21 (Cancelled)

22. (Previously presented) A method for managing resources in a communication system having resources shared by at least two operators, comprising:

receiving an access request for a first operator of the at least two operators;

executing a first determination whether there are sufficient amount of free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system;

executing a second determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system exceeds a first threshold;

executing a third determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds a second threshold; and

deciding on accepting the access request based on the results of the first, second and third determinations.

23. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 22, wherein the act of executing the second determination is performed only if the first determination shows that there are sufficient free resources ~~shared by~~ shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system.

24. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 22, wherein the access request is accepted if the second determination shows that the total amount of resources ~~shared by~~ shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system does not exceed the first threshold.

25. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the act of size discrimination based on the capacity requested by the incoming connection dependent on the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system if the second determination shows that the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system does not exceed the first threshold.

26. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 25, wherein the size discrimination comprises:

determination of a threshold class dependent on the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system;

comparing an amount of resources required by the access request with a maximum accepted size associated with the determined threshold class;

accepting the access request if the amount of resources required by the access request is smaller than or equal to the maximum accepted size; and

rejecting the access request if the amount of resources required by the access request is larger than the maximum accepted size.

27. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 23, wherein the act of executing the third determination is performed only if the second determination shows that the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system exceeds the first threshold.

28. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 27, wherein the access request is accepted if the third determination shows that the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator does not exceed the second threshold.

29. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the first threshold is equal to a pre-determined congestion threshold of the shared by the at least two operators.

30. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the first threshold is equal to a pre-determined congestion threshold of the shared by the at least two operators minus the amount of resources required by the access request.

31. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the second threshold is equal to a pre-determined portion of the total resources shared by the at least two operators allocated to the first operator.

32. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the second threshold is equal to a pre-determined portion of the total resources shared by the at least two operators allocated to the first operator minus the amount of resources required by the access request.

33. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising the act of storing a respective measure of the fraction of resources shared by the at least two operators currently in use by each of said at least two operators, said measure for the first operator being updated upon

accepting the access request or when an already established connection for the first operator is terminated.

34. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 33, further comprising updating the respective measures by means of resource utilisation information from an external source.

35. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the access request is rejected if the first determination shows that there are not sufficient free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system or if the third determination shows that the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds the second threshold.

36. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, further comprising evaluating a priority of the access request if the first determination shows that there are not sufficient free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system or if the third determination shows that the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds the second threshold.

37. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein the act of evaluating the priority comprises:

executing a fourth determination whether the sum of the free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system and a total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators being occupied by traffic having a lower priority than the priority of the access request for the first operator is smaller than the amount of resources required for the access request for the first operator;

rejecting the access request if the fourth determination shows that the sum of the free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system and the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators being occupied by traffic having a lower priority than the priority of the access request for the first operator is smaller than the amount of resources required for the access request for the first operator; and

pre-empting on-going traffic sufficient to allow the access request for the first operator if the fourth determination shows that the sum of the free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system and the total amount of resources shared by the at least two operators being occupied by traffic having a lower priority than the priority of the access request for the first operator is equal to or larger than the amount of resources required for the access request for the first operator, and accepting the access request.

38. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 37, wherein the act of pre-empting in turn comprises:

determining which operator of the at least two operators presently being in most excess of its target resource utilisation;

selecting a connection of the operator of the at least two operators presently being in most excess of its target resource utilisation having a lower priority than the priority of the access request for the first operator;

releasing the selected connection;

determining whether the resources required for the access request is larger than the free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system; and

repeating the previous acts if the resources required for the access request is larger than the free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system.

39. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 22, wherein the act of receiving an access request for the first operator in turn comprises:

receiving a renegotiation request for an ongoing call from the first operator;

providing a supplementary access request for the first operator having an access request size corresponding to the difference between a requested size

and a present size of the ongoing call, if the requested size is larger than the present size; and

performing a change of resource utilisation for the ongoing call, if the present size is larger than the requested size.

40. (Previously presented) A device for managing resources in a communication system, the communication system having resources shared by at least two operators, said device comprising:

means for receiving an access request for a first operator of the at least two operators;

means for executing a first determination whether there are sufficient amount of free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system;

means for executing a second determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system exceeds a first threshold;

means for executing a third determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds a second threshold; and

means for deciding on accepting the access request based on the results of the first, second and third determinations.

41. (Previously presented) An arrangement comprising a device for managing resources in a communication system, the communication system having resources shared by at least two operators, the device comprising:

means for receiving an access request for a first operator of the at least two operators;

means for executing a first determination whether there are sufficient amount of free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system;

means for executing a second determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system exceeds a first threshold;

means for executing a third determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds a second threshold; and

means for deciding on accepting the access request based on the results of the first, second and third determinations.

42. (Previously presented) An arrangement according to claim 41, wherein the arrangement is a shared universal mobile telecommunication system terrestrial radio access network and the device is comprised in a radio network controller.

43. (Previously presented) An arrangement according to claim 41, wherein the arrangement is the communication system.

44. (Previously presented) A method of claim 22, wherein the acts of executing the first determination, executing the second determination, executing the third determination, and deciding on accepting the access request are performed by a node of the communication system.

45. (Previously presented) A method of claim 22, wherein the second threshold is related to an agreed proportion of resources shared by the at least two operators for use by the first operator.

46. (Previously presented) A node for managing resources in a communication system, the communication system comprising a radio access network (RAN) having resources shared by at least two operators, said device comprising:

means for receiving an access request for a first operator of the at least two operators;

a shared resources manager configured to execute plural determinations and to decide on accepting the access request based on the results of the plural determinations, the plural determinations including:

a first determination whether there are sufficient amount of free resources shared by the at least two operators available in the communication system;

a second determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use in the communication system exceeds a first threshold; and

a third determination whether a total amount of said resources shared by the at least two operators in use for the first operator exceeds a second threshold.